

The Duties of Rejoycing in a day of Prosperity. 8

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Recommended in a

SERMON

PREACH'D before the

QUEEN,

AT HER

ROYAL CHAPPEL

IN

WINDSOR.

On SUNDAY, June 23. 1706.

ECCLES. vii. 14.

In the Day of Prosperity be joyful, but in the day of Adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that Man should find nothing after him.

By *White Kennet*, D. D. Archdeacon of *Huntingdon*.

Published by Her Majesties Special Command.

LONDON: Printed by *H. Hills*, in *Black-fryars*, near the *Water-side*. For the Benefit of the Poor. 1708.



ECCLES. VII. 14.

In the Day of Prosperity be joyful, but in the day of Adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that Man should find nothing after him.

BY the Day is meant any time or seasons, whether of shorter or longer Continuance, as God the Author and disposer of times and seasons shall appoint unto us.

By a day of Prosperity is meant any happy juncture of Affairs, private or publick, when it goeth well with us, and God poureth out his Benefits, or any one signal Blessing on us.

By being Joyful is meant a Complacency of Mind, and the shewing all suitable Expressions of Gratitude and Gladness, for the Mercies that God is pleas'd to give us so richly to enjoy.

By a day of Adversity is meant the Midnight of that former day, a Cloud on the Reverse of Light and Fire, a time of trouble and sore Trial; and by considering in that day is meant a Reflection on the uncertainty of this World, or rather on the Sins and Follies that may have deserv'd that fatal Change.

By God's setting the one over against the other, is meant the manifold Wisdom of Providence interchanging the Scenes of Humane Life, and in the Course of this World bringing about a Succession of Joy and Grief, as of Heat and Cold, Light and Darkness, opposite to one another,

To the end that Man should find nothing after him, does seem to mean, that such a vicissitude of humane Affairs makes up the Circle of this lower World; the future state

state alone is unchangeable, and eternally the same with that God, who is *without variableness or Shadow of turning.*

By the whole Verse we ought to understand, that under any favourable Dispensations of Providence, it is our Duty to be Comfortable and Cheerful: But not to betray the mirth of Fools, not to lose our selves in the extravagance of sensual carnal Sinners. We should be wisely moderate in our well-temper'd Expressions of Joy: Alway remembering there is need of being Sedate and Serious, even in the midst of Joy and Triumph. Thou knowest not what may be on the morrow: In the time of laughing it may be soon a time to mourn. The Days of Prosperity and Adversity have their course and change appointed to them. Nothing durable! The Evening and the Morning that make the Day, break in and tread upon each other. Be prepar'd for all Events: in a good Day put not the evil one too far from you. *In the Day of Prosperity rejoyce, but in the Day of Adversity consider: God also hath set the one over against the other, to the end that Man should find nothing after him.*

We ought to thank God and to congratulate one another, that our present Thoughts are taken up with the former part of this Text; that our Eyes are blest with a signal and surprizing *Day of Prosperity*; and our Hearts invite us, constrain us, to be *Joyful* in it.

Out of that abundance of the Heart, our Mouths shall speak thy Praise, O God, Let me direct the most rational and most religious Ways and Means of being *Joyful* in any *Day of Prosperity*.

First then, In any Day of Prosperity we must call to an early remembrance, that it is God who doth prosper us in that Day, the good Gift came down from above, from the Father of Lights, and the Author of all Mercies. Dost thou count thy self a happy Man? Recollect with Morning-Thoughts, that it was not thy auspicious Fate or Destiny, it was not thy lucky Chance or Fortune, that brought about this Happiness unto thee; but

it was the free Bounty and tender Kindness of thy God, thy good and gracious God, because he had a Favour unto thee. Say, *Awake O my Soul, and be thou Sensible and Thankful.*

This was the ingenious Temper of *Jacob*; when God had prospered his Condition, and conducted him by Angels in his happy Progress towards Peace and Plenty; then he renounces his own Merit and Praise; he makes this humble and grateful Acknowledgement to God, *Gen. 32. 10. I am not worthy of the least of all thy Mercies, and of all the Truth, which thou hast shew'd unto thy Servant; for with my Staff I pass'd over this Jordan, and now I am become two Bands: i. e. Far beyond my Deserts. I confess thy good Providence, O God, has been my only Guide and Support, and Success; with inconsiderable Force I pass'd over Jordan, and now, like that River, my course hath gathered Strength, and I am able to divide my Waters into different Streams.*

Alas! how unworthy are we of God's Mercies, if we are unmindful of the hand of God in them? So indeed our greedy Swine devour the Fruit that falleth on the Ground, without looking up to the Tree from whence it falleth: And so the *wild Asses quench their Thirst*, they refresh themselves in the Water-Books, without regarding the Fountain from whence they flow. But shall Man likewise be so void of understanding, as to catch up any Gift, without reflecting who bestows it? How justly doth the Apostle argue? *1 Cor. 4. 7. Who maketh thee to differ from another? And what hast thou that thou didst not receive? Now if thou didst receive it, why dost thou glory as if thou hadst not receiv'd it?*

This Recognition of the Grace and Goodness of God ought more especially to be made in any time of Victory over our Enemies: when we must not affect or assume the Glory to our selves; but must offer it as a Sacrifice due to the Lord of Hosts, a Sacrifice of Praise and Thanksgiving, acceptable and well-Pleasing in his Sight. *Psal. 44. 2. 3. For they got not the Land in possession through their own Sword, neither was it their own Arm that help'd them:*

them: But thy right Hand and thine Arm, and the Light of thy Countenance, because thou hadst a Favour unto them. The very Heathens understood War to be a necessary Appeal to Heaven, and when they obtain'd any eminent Success, their natural Notion was, that the Gods had so decided the Cause on their side; and they made their glad Oblations for that divine Justice and Favour done unto them. And yet they were blinded thro' ignorance of the true God; they talk'd of an *Alea Belli*, a throwing of the Dye or the chance in War: Whereas we know that no event is meerly fortuitous; or if there be a *Lot cast into the Lap*, yet the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord. Wherefore let us look upward, and make this our first Duty in any *Day of Prosperity*, to remember that it is God who hath prospered us in that Duty.

Secondly, Our second Duty in a Day of Prosperity is
 ' To look near, and search into the ways of God's Wis-
 ' dom and Goodness, to see how and in what manner
 ' he wrought out that Prosperity for us.

Some Persons take in the multitude of God's Mercies as it were by content, without troubling themselves to enquire into the particular Value of them: They think only in general, and view the full Heap, without turning over any part of it. This is but a slovenly way of Inadvertence and of wretched Negligence. So the hasty Traveller by Night casteth up his Eyes by chance, and spieth the Firmament full of Stars, and yet stayeth not to contemplate the Order and Beauty of them. The Works of God are great and marvellous, if they are *sought out of them who have pleasure therein*: They are so excellently done, that they will bear the nearest and the strictest View: At a distance we have but a slight and imperfect Glance; we must approach and see them as it were *Face to Face*, if we would be let into the Mysteries of Glory in them. Every happy Revolution of Affairs, hangeth on a Chain of Providences so fine, and so exquisitely link'd together, that a heedless Eye can by no

means discern the various Connection of it: There must be close and intimate Observation and Research, to carry along the Clew that leads from Earth to Heaven.

If private Persons in their Prosperity did but seriously consider, what a maze of Difficulties they have run through, what a train of Blessings have waited and crowded on them, and how some of their chief Misfortunes have unaccountably turn'd to their best Advantage! I say, if they would turn back and look up, they could not but admire and adore the wonderful Goodness of God toward them. But publick States and Kingdoms have often a more remarkable share in God's wise ordering and disposing their Peace and Safety. We ourselves have seen a Restauration of Church and State, and again a diliverance of them in a later Revolution: Both in such a high time, and both after so miraculous a manner, that we are in a Dream every time we think of them, especially those of you who know the secret operations of 'em, how different causes did combine, and how divided hearts did unexpectedly and almost undesignedly unite to help bring about what God was doing! How panick Fears, deprest the stronger side, and how Hopes even against Hope did raise the weaker! And how in both Cases, the whole Work was done by an impression on the Minds of Men, without lifting up their Hands without shedding Blood! God's ways are not as our ways!

This Experience of the infinite Wisdom of Providence, should instruct us upon any new Scence of Joys, to take more than a transient View, to fix to dwell upon the publick Mercy, till we begin at least to comprehend the Heighth and the depth of it. They are the strange Circumstances that endear and ennoble every Action. We do not rightly understand any Motion, till we narrowly search and discern, what latent Powers there be to give the Impulse, and to maintain the Communication of it.

That

That in the Threats of a dreadful Siege, the Winds and the Waves, which are at God's Command, should retard the forming of it, which otherwise (if begun upon the first Project) must have fatally prevail'd. That this Siege however retarded should be so forcibly carry'd on, as to be within a Day or two of certain Success; and yet within that Day or two that Help should come in time of need, as it were flying on the Wings of the Wind, driving away a numerous Fleet before them, and so pouring in Relief when the last Breath was drawing! That a formidable Army should then be silent in their Fears, and swift in their Retreat, and not minding the eclipsing of their Master's Glory, tho' a bare Jealousie of so doing, was once a pretended cause of War! That this one Disgrace was possibly to be covered, by sending Orders for the speedier Engagement in another Place: That so in distress and storm, one Wave of Calamity might serve to carry on another! That an Enemy should for this Reason seem to offer Battel, who had learn'd all the Arts of evading Battel. That their appearing to make the first Onset, should be an appearance only!

That our braver Troops should disdain to expect a Charge, should in their wonted manner prefer the making of it! That our General, the Soul of all, should breathe in every part, and dare to be more than once ready to expire; and yet that the precious Life should be bound up in the Hand of God, to animate the whole Body, and invigorate every Member of it! That this valiant Leader should not stop but in absolute Victory, nor then should stop, but press on to use, and to improve; and to enjoy the Victory; to make the Pursuit, if possible, be more Glorious than the Defeat; to break, to scatter the People that shall no more delight in War; to demand, to accept the Surrender of Fortresses, Cities, and whole Provinces; to do in a few Days what would have rewarded our Hopes, if they had been deferr'd to several years! This and more is God's doing, and the

more nearly we behold it, the more marvellous will it be in our Eyes! It will engage us to this second Duty in our Day of Prosperity, which is, "To look near, and search into the ways of God's Wisdom and Goodness, to see how and in what manner he wrought out that Prosperity for us.

Thirdly, A third Duty in the Day of our Prosperity is 'To be Moderate, Meek and Prudent, not to swell with Pride, nor be exalted out of measure. As is the Infirmary of many lesser Souls, who cannot bear the being Great; the higher they advance, the more their Heads turn; the more Ostentation, Vain-glory, and Insolence, till their proud Boasting does meet with some terrible Rebuke; and then the more exalted they were in their prosperous Estate, the more abject and contemptible they will lye down in the Dust.

It was thus with vain *Nebuchadnezzar*, who would have all the Nations bowe down to the Image that he had affected to set up; and was full of his great swelling Words, *Dan. 4. 30. Is not this (says he) great Babylon that I have built for the House of the Kingdom, by the Might of my Power, and for the Honour of my Majesty?* Till to humble him, a Voice tell from Heaven, saying, *The Kingdom is departed from thee.* And so he became the dull Image in his own Dream, *Dan. 11. 32. miserably degenerating from a Head of fine Gold to Feet part of Iron, and part of Clay.* It is thus with many other weak People, who can afford to contain themselves while their Bounds are narrow; but when they come to enlarge their Wealth and Dominion, then are they full of themselves, Despisers of other Men, Haughty, Imperious, Insufferable; and nothing can restore them to a sound Mind, but the being once more reduced to a low Degree,

Let us prepare our Heart against Temptation; Let us learn in our Day of Prosperity to keep Wisdom and Religion, learn to bear a happy Change, without betraying Prodigality and Affectations of Pride: Not to let our Passions flow in too fast upon our Fortunes, but

to walk humbly in our highest Station. Especially to avoid the Temptations arising from any quick and amazing Progress of our Arms: The Temptations of vaunting our selves, and reviling our Adversaries, and of doing as the *Greeks* and *Romans* did, borrowing the Vices and Vanities of those we Conquer. We have seen and certainly have despised their vain ways of magnifying every Action? of Proceffioning and Singing for every little Advantage; of striking Medals, and raising Statutes, and forming Inscriptions, and labouring for many Devices, with Flattery, with Arrogance, with Blasphemy it self. All such false ways let us utterly abhor. Truth is a plain thing, and needeth no Inventions; and a true Greatness of Mind is above the World and the Pumps of it. The worthiest Heroes have been the least fond of their own Glory; have been calm, even and unaffected Men? have set a wise Example of this third Duty in a Day of Prosperity, which is, 'To be Moderate, Meek and Humble.

Fourthly, In the Day of Prosperity we should still remember, 'To be Sedate and Serious, and Sober, and 'Temporate in all things within our own Command, 'and constantly on our Guard.

Many loose People do make their Prosperity an occasion of Riot and Excess, of many foolish and hurtful Lusts; and propose nothing but the Pleasures of Sin for that abused Season of Gladness. A fatal way of Rejoycing for Men to be swallow'd up in Sensuality, and run away from themselves in Transports of Frolick and Madness. True Joy is not to lose our Senses, but to raise them into more quick and lively Apprehensions of the Divine Goodness, and our own Felicity. The Affignations for Drunkenness and Revels can serve only for the Mirth of Fools, the Crackling of Thorns, the short Blaze, and the offensive Smoak. Therefore said *Solomon*, the *Prosperity of Fools shall destroy them*, i. e. Men of Levity and ungovern'd Humour, who have not discretion to make a right and sober use of God's Blessings, but offer up their Joys, as the *Sacrifice of Fools*, in a riotous
and

and extravagant way of living: They soon make an end of their Substance, or prehaps of themselves. Happier Men, if they had less prosper'd in the World!

We know the time, when a glorious Restitution of the King and Royal Family, and a Restauration of the Government after many years interruption, was a Blessing too great for the generality of People to use wisely, or well to bear. They indulg'd themselves in Liberties, which they thought at that time excusable; till a Habit of Dissoluteness was coming on, that threatened to corrupt the Age, and even to destroy a licentious Nation. Any like opportunity of universal Triumph may expose us to the like Temptations and Dangers, if we be not Sober and Reserv'd, and Watchful; not turning this Grace of God into Wantonness, but holding fast our Prudence and a good Conscience, and so sanctifying our great Successes by a worthy use of them: It is so far alone, we any way deserve them, or indeed any way enjoy them.

If in the midst of our exceeding Happiness, we only grow more Soft and Sensual, Greater Libertines, and looser Companions; then do we sadly prostitute the Mercies of God to the Service of the Wicked One, and his Wages of our Sin may be temporal Destruction, as well as a Damnation that must be eternal. For we are then doing our Enemies Work for them, which they could not do themselves: We are dispiriting an *English* People, and preparing them to be weaker than their Neighbours. For 'tis a miserable mistake that some Men commit in thinking, that Drunkenness is a Principle of Courage: It is so of Ferity and Brutishness: It is so for quarrelling and fighting with Friends and one another.

But Martial Valour requires the Sound and the Whole Man, not to rush like the Horse into Battel, but to have Foresight and deliberate Resolution. Hence there never was in History a perfect General, fam'd for unerring Conduct, and blest with a Series of continual Success,
but

but one who knew how at all Hours to be Master of himself, not voluptuous, but with a Soul at liberty to think, and to execute at any Minute without Surprise. So much it is a Duty in a Day of Prosperity, ' To be ' Sober and Temperate in all things.

Fifthly, a fifth Duty seasonable in a Day of Prosperity, is, ' To Rejoyce with Charity and Love, not to ' despise or forget the Calamities of them that mourn.

Private Persons and Bodies of Men under any grievous Adversity, do justly desire to be remember'd and reliev'd. And therefore if any of those Persons or Bodies should emerge from their Affliction, they should not forget the Miseries of those who were lately Fellow-sufferers with them; who having been Partakers of their evil things, should be now made partakers of their good things. Or else it is Ingrateful, and somewhat Inhuman! And yet this is often the baseness of a great part of Mankind: In a common affliction they cry for equal help, but when they themselves are deliver'd, it sufficeth; they have a separate Interest to serve, they betray, or at best they neglect their late Friends. Such unthankful and unholy Men were censured by the Prophet *Amos*, when redeem'd from Distress and Danger, then they *Eat and Drank and Anointed themselves*, and all the while were not *grieved for the Affliction of Joseph, i. e.* would not be sensible of the Sufferings of others, when their own turn was serv'd.

Such like hard usage may be long the Neglect, and at last the Necessity of some declining Power! Not to keep the fond Promise of restoring Princes, and of disposing Crowns and Empires; but to leave his Associates in Disgrace and irrecoverable Ruin. Whereas this can never be the Oversight, nor the Inability (we hope) of righteous and honourable Allies, whose end of War is Peace to all the World, who take up Arms to relieve the Oppressed; to bring back the Persecuted, to let the Slaves go free, to do Right to all who suffer Wrong; and so to set a generous Example to this fifth Duty in the Day of Prosperity,

Prosperity, which is, ' To Rejoyce with Charity and
' Love, not to despise or forget the Calamities of them
' that mourn.

Sixthly, A sixth Duty in our Day of Prosperity, is,
' To shew Mercy and Compassion, not to insult the worst
' of Enemies, nor to delight in any meer Revenge upon
' them.

A Retaliation of Injures is the false Balance, and is indeed deceitful and abominable. And yet this is the frequent dealing of the World: We hunt down an Adversary for the Sweetness of being reveng'd upon him: And therefore upon any Advantage gain'd we spare him not; we tread and trample on him with utmost Indignation and Fury. This is commonly the Ferment of a weak and cowardly Disposition: They most insult their Enemies who were most afraid of them; when they prevail, their Anger is Fierce, and their Mercies are Cruel. But the brave and excellent Spirit knoweth how to spare; is always generous to a yielding Foe, and having Conquer'd him into Submission, gaineth another Victory by giving Liberty and Life. It is an Attribute of God communicable to good Men, to *have Compassion*, and in the *midst of Judgment to remember Mercy*.

However, our Enemies did once exalt themselves against all that fell into their merciless Hands, Plundering, Ravaging, Burning, Laying Waste, and turning Earth into a Place of Torments! Let us shew a contrary Example of Courage and Clemency inseperable. Those who submit will have the utmost Favour of the Articles given to them; the Sick and Wounded will find Refuge in our Hospitable Tents, and a Relief from the Hands that nobly Hurt them: The Prisoners will rejoyce in this, that their Captivity in our Land shall be easier than what they call Liberty in their own. For (I say) the exercising Cruelty and the enjoying Revenge, are not the Property of Conscience and Honour. God abhorreth the Blood-Thirsty and Deceitful Man, and of-

ten repayeth him that he hath deserv'd. Proud *Adonibezek* mangled his Royal Captives, and made 'em gather their Meat under his Table; but at last he was brought down to Sigh and Say, *As I have done so God hath requited me*, Judg. 1. 7. Tyrants and Oppressors have rarely escap'd in this Life; to put us in mind of this Duty in a Day of Prosperity, 'The showing Mercy and Compassion, not 'insulting the worst of Enemies, nor delighting in any 'mean revenge upon them.

Seventhly, Another Duty in our Day of Prosperity, is, 'To agree the better among our selves, and with one 'Heart and Mind to value and enjoy those common 'Mercies, that God hath vouchsafed to give unto us.

All publick Rejoycing supposes a mutual consent of the same People, in the same Sense of their universal Happiness; and a joynt Inclination more effectually to love and to serve one another: Whatever is a National Safety and Glory must command the Affections, the natural Affections, of all that belong to that Nation, To envy the Success of our common Cause, does betray a foreign Heart, and Blood estranged from us. If any within our own Land can be grieved for their Enemies Loss and Reproach, they must at least dissemble, they must conceal that shameful Grief for to dare to own it, would be an insufferable Thing. However, if there be any such Enemies of our own House, and we can notwithstanding secure our House, let us try to overcome even their Evil with our Good.

It is an happy Change in some Men, that while they are in trouble, they commend Mercy and Moderation; but in Prosperity they likewise sit down in the Seat of the Scornful, and exercise that very Dominion and Oppression, which they so lately condemn'd in others. As *Amos 6. 3. They put far away the evil Day, and cause the Seat of Violence to come near.* They before suffer'd under Tyranny and Persecution; and yet they practice them, as if they had never felt them. This is want of Religion; and even of that moral Gallantry, to which
some

some pretend without Religion. The Wise and Virtuous Souls will not be so corrupted by Prosperity; they in their Grandeur will be still cool, and calm, and mild and moderate. For why, Wrath and Violence serve only to provoke Man, and to incense the merciful God. In every Age and Nation, those rising Powers that would have their turn of running down others, as they themselves had been overborn; would plague and persecute, and be aveng'd on those, whom they remembred to have been their bitter Adversaries: This was not their Duty, and it rarely proved their Interest; Men hated their Fury, and their Fierceness did God restrain. In times of Calamity and Dread, there is a natural Handle given to such Animosities and fatal Strifes; but Success and Victory abroad, do by a sort of necessary Reasons, establish Peace and Union at home. We shall live (I pray God) to see, that our Conquest of the common Enemy, shall overcome all other Opposition; shall restore Charity and brotherly love.

Eighthly, The Duty I shall last mention, as completing all the rest, is, 'To express our Joys by turning unto God the Author of them, and shewing forth his Praise in a more reform'd Life and Conversation.

My Brethren, God of his Wisdom so dealeth out his Punishments and his Favours, that they may raise up in us a Sense of his Anger and his Love; that so his Judgments and his Mercies may both lead us to Repentance. We have felt some Judgments severely, and I hope we have been many of us humbled under the mighty Hand of God for them. But now, those Hearts that were too hard to be melted down by the Wrath of God, may however be mollify'd by his marvellous loving kindness lately shewn unto us. It exceeds our Description, and almost our Belief!

What an auspicious Glorious Reign is this? How doth the Beginning of it, (for we hope the few years past are but a Beginning of it) How doth it excel in Happiness and

and immortal Honour the longest Reigns in Ages gone and past! As to publick Mercies, what have we to pray for, but a continuance, a long continuance of that Royal Life, wherein all our Hearts are bound up! That alone under God will daily encrease our Blessings! The Progress of our Victorious Arms in many foreign Countries; the Effects of Union, Love and Charity in all her Majesty's Dominions: The return of rest and Peace, and Joy to all *Europe*; and the Glory of it dwelling in this our Land: And therefore here the Fruits of Righteousness and true Religion; here a Holy Nation, a peculiar People stedfast in the Faith, and zealous of good Works; who being *delivered out of the Hands of our Enemies, may serve him without Fear, in Holiness and Righteousness before him all the Days of our Life.* Amen.

FINIS.

A Catalogue of Sermons Printed and Sold by H. Hills, in
Black-fryars, near the Water-side.

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| <p>9 John Tillotson, late Archbishop
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with a Letter, and large Vindica-
tion with a 2d Letter in Answer.</p> <p>3 George Smaldrigg, D. D.</p> <p>1 John Haslewood, D. D.</p> <p>1 Rich. Smalbrooke, M. A.</p> <p>2 Will. Talbot. Bishop of Oxford.</p> <p>2 Will. Nicholson. Bp. of Carlisle.</p> <p>5 John Adams, D. D.</p> | <p>1 John Hoadly, M. A.</p> <p>2 Benj. Hoadly, M. A.</p> <p>2 Thomas Tennison, ArchBishop of
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man.</p> <p>Christianity in short, or the way to
be a good Christian.</p> <p>Good News for Repenting Sinners.</p> <p>A Letter from the Pastors and Pro-
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Prussia, with the King's Answer.</p> <p>1 Mr. Stenet a Thanksgiving.</p> <p>1 Mr. Spademan a Thanksgiving.</p> <p>1 Mr. Piggot, The frailty of Prin-
ces consider'd.</p> <p>1 Mr. Evans a Thanksgiving.</p> <p>1 Mr. Williams a Funeral Sermon
on Mr. Doolittle.</p> <p>1 Mr. Secker, Wedding-Ring.</p> <p>1 Mr. Bradbury, The Son of Tabeal</p> |
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